



Are Infant Baptism and Godparents Biblical?

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All believers in Christ are to observe baptism and the Lord's Supper, two ordinances that Jesus instituted for the church. Both rituals have important spiritual meaning and should be observed in obedience to Christ and in accordance with His instructions. It is, however, regrettable that the enemy has gradually put Christ's instructions into debate to create a misunderstanding on this subject. As a result, some Christians have deliberately or mistakenly evolved their different ways of performing either or both rituals and/or often associate them with an altered meaning.

Baptism is derived from a word translated as “*baptise*” which means “*to dip or immerse in water*”. So this ritual must be performed by fully immersing a believing person in water as a symbol of his identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection ([Romans 6:3-4](#)). Pouring or sprinkling, the method used by some Christians fails to illustrate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself set the example by being baptized by John the Baptiste and thereafter commanded His disciples to baptize those who believed in Him and repented of their sins to receive salvation in His name ([Matthew 3:13–17](#) , [Matthew 28:19](#), [Acts 2:38](#)).

In accordance with the Lord's command to preach the Gospel and baptize new believers, one must first believe in Christ and repent to be baptized. Belief and repentance are prerequisites for baptism, as the Apostles emphasized, and nowhere do the Scriptures communicate otherwise ([Acts 2:38](#); [16:30–31](#)). For people to believe, the Gospel must be preached but only those who accept the Gospel and repent can be baptized. The Apostle Paul makes it clear that faith comes from hearing and accepting the Gospel message, which not all people obeyed ([Romans 10: 14,16-17](#)). In fact, baptism should be reserved for those who first make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, as obedience to Christ and a public outward testimony of faith, or indeed, the inward changes in a believer's life. As such, a child who does not understand the Gospel cannot place faith in Christ to qualify for baptism.

Those who practice infant baptism often teach that water baptism is how the Holy Spirit is imparted to an individual. However, the Bible makes it clear that we receive the Holy Spirit when we have faith in Christ ([Galatians 3:2-3](#), [Ephesians 1:13-14](#)). Others believe that water baptism cleanses sins and that one must therefore be baptized to receive salvation for eternal life. However, water cannot cleanse our sins but Jesus shed blood can ([Matthew 26:28](#); [Romans 5:8–9](#)). Works, even the work of baptism, are not the reason a person is saved ([Titus 3:5](#)). Salvation is God's grace ([2 Corinthians 5:18-21](#)) and can be received through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and His atonement for our sins ([John 3:16](#); [Ephesians 2:8](#), [Hebrews 11:1](#)). If baptism were required for entrance into eternal life, then Jesus was wrong to say to the thief on the cross, “*Today you will be with me in Paradise*” ([Luke 23:41-43](#)). Baptism is therefore the result of salvation as the obedience after faith, but not a contributor to it.

To be baptized, one must therefore believe in Jesus Christ and repent of one's sins ([Mark 16:15-17](#); [Acts 2:38](#)). No one should be baptized in the faith of the Church or in the faith of his parents. Believer's baptism involves a person hearing the Gospel, accepting Christ as Savior, and choosing to be baptized. Since infants and small children cannot make an informed decision to profess Jesus as Lord, their baptism has no spiritual significance. Nowhere in Scripture is the practice of infant baptism even implied. God judges the hearts of individuals and rewards each based on the decisions made by that individual, not by his or her parents ([Jeremiah 17:10](#) ; [Matthew 16:27](#) ; [Romans 2:5–6](#) ; [2 Corinthians 5:10](#)). If infant baptism made an infant righteous before God, then only those children whose parents wanted it would be saved while the rest would be condemned! This view is obviously unscriptural. As baptism consists of obedience to Christ after faith, a person, whether or not they were baptized as a child, will still, at some point in the future, have to make a personal decision to repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ for their salvation.

So, what about godparents? In some Christian denominations, a godparent is defined as a person, other than the biological parent, who witnesses a child's baptism and is then willing to assist them in their catechesis, as well as their lifelong spiritual formation. So, is it biblical? This concept is completely unscriptural and completely traditional. Biblical baptism requires that a repentant individual with faith in Jesus Christ as Savior be baptized as a public declaration of belief in Christ and as a picture of one's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. It should be a personal decision and the one making it should be old enough to make that choice, with a better understanding of what they are doing and what it means. No one is required to speak on behalf of the baptized, just as no one is required to witness anyone's salvation except the Holy Spirit ([Matthew 3:16-17](#)). It would therefore be inconsistent to associate godparent with a believer's baptism, but if the concept is entirely separate from baptism, then godparenting might be appropriate.

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Wagabi (6 months ago)

Please note that baptism is practised in these New Testament times but springs from the OT practice of circumcision in Genesis 17 and Prophet Ezekiel's message of God sprinkling clean water upon His chosen ones in Ezekiel 36.

Moses (6 months ago)

The fact that the Bible does not mention godparenting anywhere, it would be sufficient to call it unbiblical. Unfortunately, practitioners prefer to view this practice as neither accepted nor condemned. However, let us consider asking ourselves some questions like: Where does the practice take source? Something drawn from traditional belief system would likely be associated with traditional or cultural practices, with contextualised meaning than biblical meaning. So, does it truly mean what people know it to mean? Some religious groups may have secret behind their liturgy known only by the top clergy (e.g.: Mariology and Semiramis). Does it not affect the true meaning of the biblical baptism? It is already not equivalent to the biblical ritual but stands with its own goal and meaning!

